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TO: Department of Justice
FARA registration unit

FROM: Ivan Butina
Global Communicators, LLC

RE: Distribution of material covered by FARA
Registration No. 5817

DATE: November 29, 2011

Global Communicators, LLC, wrote the attached electronic newsletters, on behalf of the Office of Commercial Affairs, Royal Thai Embassy, and distributed copies electronically to congressional staff, Executive Branch officials, trade associations, think tank officials, news media, and business leaders. The distribution list counts 2,168 names.

This is a one-page, online newsletter, and the disclaimer appears at the bottom on the front page online.

Attachment

NSD/CEES/REFUSAL UNIT
2011 DEC - 2 PM 3:41

JJ



THAILAND

OFFICE OF COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS

Strategic Partners to the U.S.

October 24, 2011

www.thailembdc.org



New Thai Prime Minister, Commerce Minister To Attend Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Event Hosted by President Obama Nov. 12-13 in Hawaii

As the culmination of a year-long series of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meetings sponsored this year by the United States, President Obama will host the APEC Leaders' Meeting in Honolulu next month that will highlight progress made at the preceding 2011 meetings.



Thailand will be represented by **Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra** on her first visit to the United States as prime minister. As a graduate student, the former businesswoman and politician received a master's degree in public administration from Kentucky State University. She is the first female prime minister. Prime Minister Shinawatra will be accompanied by **Minister of Commerce Kittiratt Na-Ranong**.



Senior officials from the 21 member economies of the APEC forum, including Thailand, took action in San Francisco late last month to seek deeper regional economic integration, promote sustainable growth, and facilitate job creation. The United States is hosting the 2011 series of meetings again since the first meeting 18 years ago in Bake Island, Washington.



A delegation representing the Office of Commercial Affairs at the Royal Thai Embassy in Washington has participated in the APEC series of meetings in Washington, Montana, and San Francisco and will participate in the Honolulu wrap-up meeting.

NSD/DCES/REGISTRATION
UNIT

2011 DEC - 2 PM 3:42

Thai Office of Commercial Affairs Minister, Officials Meet With International Trade Agencies In New England

From October 11 - 14, 2011, Minister (Commercial) Mrs. Kessiri Siripakom led a delegation to visit her U.S. trade and commerce counterparts in America's Northeast region to introduce the OCA as well as to explore other trade-related areas of mutual interest.



The OCA delegation had meetings in Boston, MA; Concord, NH; Portland, ME; and Montpelier, VT. Others in the delegation included Counselor (Commercial) Ms. Jittima Srithaporn, Executive Director (New York Thai Trade Center) Mrs. Somjin Plengkhum, and Staff Officers Mr. Chetwut Tirattanawong and Mr. Amorndeb Sawangdee.



Meetings were held with Ms. Kristen Rupert, Executive Director of the AIM International Business Council in Boston (left).



In Concord (right) they met with Mr. George M. Bald, Commissioner of the New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development, and Ms. Ellie White, International Training Manager, International Trade Resource Center.



In Portland (left), the delegation met with Ms. Janine Bisaillon-Cary, Director of International Trade, Department of Economic Development; and Mr. Wade E. Merritt, Vice President, and Ms. Tony E. Atwell, Asia Desk Director, both of the Maine International Trade Center.

Deputy Secretary and Economic Development Director, Agency of Commerce and Community Development; and Ms. Susan Murray, Vermont Director, U.S. Export Assistance Center.

Montpelier meetings (right) included Ms. Patricia Moulton Powden,



OCA Responds to USTR National Trade Estimate Report, Describes Actions Taken by Thailand

In response to a request for comment from the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative to its 2012 National Trade Estimate Report (NTE), the Office of Commercial Affairs (OCA) of the Royal Thai Embassy on October 4, 2011 issued a 14-page response to points raised by the U.S. government.

Thailand is pursuing ongoing restructuring and amendment of its tax system, rules and regulations to improve and simplify the process and procedures.

These changes are consistent with our obligations as well as international norms and standards. Thailand's import regulations and requirements follow WTO guidelines that protect national interest, health and safety, and apply to both domestic production and imports.

A copy of the complete response may be obtained at <http://commercethaiusa.org>



August Trade Statistics Continue to Show Substantial Growth, but Floods will have Major Impact

While U.S. world trade grew to \$2.4 trillion, a 17.26 percent increase, between January and August 2011, U.S. trade with Thailand increased at a higher rate. U.S. trade with Thailand through August stood at \$24.2 billion, an increase of 20.16 percent compared with the first eight months of 2010. Specifically, exports from the United States to Thailand rose 29.21 percent, totaling \$7.4 billion through August. For the same time period, the United States increased its imports from Thailand 16.56 percent, reaching just over \$16.8 billion.



While Thailand's economy has continued to show robust growth, devastating floods that have struck the country and Southeast Asia more broadly will have a major impact on the Thai economy. Thailand's central bank projected that as much as 1.7 percentage points might be cut off the country's economic growth rate because of the floods. The National Economic and Social Development Board had predicted the Thai economy would expand by about 3.5 to 4 percent before the flood crisis struck.



THAILAND

OFFICE OF COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS

Strategic Partners to the U.S.

November 21, 2011

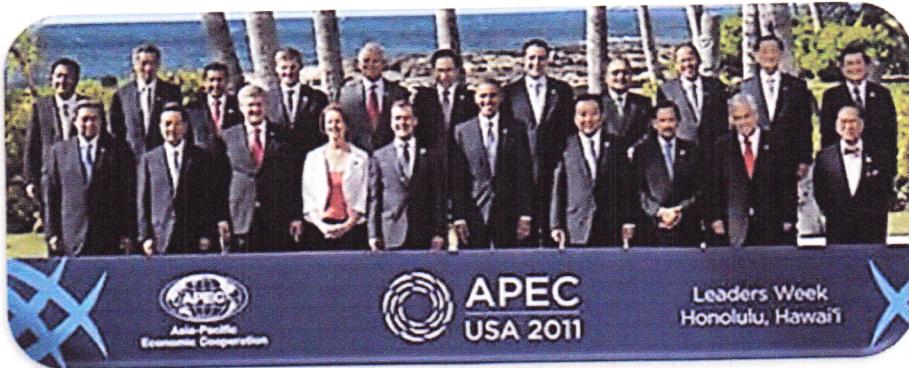
www.thaiembdc.org



Special Issue on APEC Meeting

New Highways, Rivers, Railways, Towns Part of Thai Flood Prevention Plan

*Deputy Prime Minister Assures Business Leaders at APEC
Thailand will Rescue, Restore and Rebuild from Floods*



NSO/CES/REGISTRATION
UNIT

2011 DEC - 2 PM 3:42

HONOLULU, Hawaii (Nov. 14, 2011, from Bangkok Post) - A new river, new highways, new railways and new towns are among the government's long-term flood prevention measures. Deputy Prime Minister and Commerce Minister Kittiratt Na-Ranong told multinational business leaders attending the APEC Leaders meeting here last week, who expressed concerns that any repeat of the heavy flooding in Thailand will cause huge damage again.

He said leaders and executives from multinational firms, including Google, Microsoft, AT&T, Cargill, Boeing and GE, expressed concerns over Thailand's worst flooding for half a century at the U.S.-APEC Business Coalition meeting.

Mr. Kittiratt, who attended the APEC meeting on behalf of Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, told the business leaders the government has a "3Rs" plan - rescue, restore and rebuild - to secure growth in response to the floods.

"On the rescue phase, I reiterate Thailand's firm resolve to provide the best possible relief efforts to all the people and businesses affected by the flood, and to expedite a full and speedy recovery," he said. Regarding restoration, the deputy prime minister said, "We aim to restore not only the physical damage to factories, farmlands, infrastructure and homes, but we are working hard to restore confidence of the international community that we will prevent a similar catastrophe with better disaster preparedness and resiliency."

In the rebuilding phase, the government has planned investment in water resource management, to prevent heavy floods, particularly in densely populated communities and business districts. Initially, the development would include digging a new river to act as a floodway leading from the Central Plains to the sea. A dual track railway or a highway would also be developed along the river. New town development and new city planning are also in the pipeline.



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APEC Ministerial Meeting Pushes for Progress toward Free Trade Area of the Asia Pacific Region by 2013

HONOLULU, Hawaii (Nov. 11, 2011) - APEC Minister meeting in Honolulu last week reported significant progress in strengthening trade regional economic integration and expanding trade aimed at creating the Free Trade Area of the Asia Pacific region in two years. Movement has been achieved in reducing trade transaction costs, improving supply chain performance, addressing barriers to small and mid-size enterprises (SMEs) trading in the region, establishing cross-border privacy rules, addressing unauthorized camcording, facilitating investment, strengthening food security, improving ease of doing business, and facilitating regional travel, facilitating secure trade.

Green growth was a major discussion at the APEC meeting with commitments made on promoting liberalization of trade and investment in environmental goods and services, streamlining import procedures for energy-efficient demonstration vehicles, facilitating trade in remanufactured products, rationalizing and phasing out fossil fuel subsidies, reducing energy intensity, developing low emission strategies, and promoting SMEs participation in green growth sectors. Agreements were also reached on advancing regulatory convergence and cooperation, promoting economic and technical cooperation, and strengthening APEC as an institution. For more details, please reference <http://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers>.

Prime Minister Meets with Obama at East Asia Summit on Flood Recovery Plan, Proliferation Security



President Barack Obama and Thailand Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra meet Nov. 19th at ASEAN meeting in Bali. (AFP)

Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra met with President Barack Obama at the East Asia Summit on Saturday, Nov. 19 in Bali, Indonesia, and expressed Thailand's appreciation to the United States for support in its efforts to cope with the flood crisis. She also informed Mr. Obama of her government's comprehensive plan to address the situation, which includes help for affected American companies in their recovery process.

The prime minister said Thailand would support the U.S.-backed Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), a global effort that aims to stop trafficking of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their delivery systems.

Thai Foreign Minister Surapong Tovichakchaikul, also present at the bilateral meeting with the president, said Thailand would need to study the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership initiative free-trade agreement further to determine how it would affect domestic industries.

The prime minister reassured President Obama that Thailand stands ready to play a role with a view to helping Myanmar carry out reforms towards democracy and national reconciliation. She also affirmed that Thailand would continue to provide shelter for refugees from Myanmar on a humanitarian basis, and help ensure they would be prepared and equipped with skills for their livelihood should they wanted to return to their homeland.

President Obama invited the Thai prime minister to visit the United States early next year.



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THAILAND

OFFICE OF COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS

Strategic Partners to the U.S.

September 23, 2011

www.thaiembdc.org



Thailand Ranked in Top 20 of 183 World Economies For Ease of Doing Business, 12th in Trade Reforms



Winston-Salem, NC (Sept. 8, 2011) - Thai Office of Commercial Affairs Minister Kessiri Siripakorn, speaking at a gathering of 40 North Carolina business leaders at an OCA-sponsored business breakfast at Wake Forest University here, said that the Thai government's policy aims to push Thailand into the top 10 ranks of the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index in the next year.

"Currently we are ranked in the top 20 of the world's 183 economies measured for ease of doing business," the Minister said. "but we are working hard to make business relationships even more efficient for U.S. and global business trading partners."

Mrs. Siripakorn said, "The ASEAN Single Window, a streamlined integrated export and import process, will be implemented in 2012. This will greatly facilitate the flow of cross-border trade through expedited customs clearance and cargo releases."

BOI Director Siriporn Nurugsa described Thailand as a gateway to Southeast Asian markets that should be of great interest to U.S. businesses, offering much more than Singapore and other entry points. "In the Asia-Pacific region, Thailand is ranked No. 3 in efficiency, No. 4 in corporate governance, 15th worldwide among most attractive locations for foreign direct investment, the top destination in the world for expat experience, with competitive wage rates and low cost of living."

Thailand and the United States maintain a vibrant and robust trade relationship. Overall, Thailand is the 27th largest export market for U.S. goods, with the U.S. exporting an impressive \$6.37 billion in goods between January and July 2011. This figure represents almost a 28 percent increase in the first seven months of 2011 compared to the same period in 2010.

Presentations were made by officials of the Thai Board of Investment, Thai Trade Center, Tourism Authority of Thailand, and by the Thai Honorary Trade Advisor based in High Point, NC. Copies of the PowerPoint remarks are available from [OCA Web site](#). The business leaders were welcomed by Wake Forest University President Nathan Hatch and North Carolina Department of Commerce Director of Foreign Operations Derek Chen.



Officials participating in the Sept. 8 program (from left) Mark Phillips, Honorary Trade Advisor; Wake Forest President Nathan Hatch; Siriporn Nurugsa, BOI Director; Somjin Rengkhum, Executive, Thai Trade Center New York, and Kessiri Siripakorn, Minister (Commercial). Steve Johnson, Marketing Manager for Thai tourism also spoke.

Continued >

ISO/ICES/REGISTRATION UNIT

Thai Students Studying at North Carolina Universities Join Thai Officials at UNC Chapel Hill Briefing and Reception

In an effort to brief Thai students studying in North Carolina about Thai-U.S. business and trade issues - and to relieve any homesickness they may be experiencing - Thai OCA Minister Kessiri and Thai officials who participated in the Sept. 8th business breakfast at Winston-Salem welcomed 50 students to a briefing and reception at the Kenan Institute on the campus of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. "Thai students who understand American business and culture can become valuable executives of U.S. companies operating in Thailand when they return home," Minister Kessiri said.



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NSD/ICES/REGISTRATION
UNIT

2011 DEC -2 PM 3:42



THAILAND

OFFICE OF COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS

Strategic Partners to the U.S.

August 24, 2011

www.thaiembdc.org



Latest Thai Trade Data... 'Robust Growth'



Thai trade statistics released by the U.S. Commerce Department August 15, 2011, show that for the first six months of 2011, Thai-U.S. trade volume totaled \$17.7 billion, a 20.43 percent increase over the same period in 2010.

Exports from the U.S. to Thailand were \$5.5 billion, a 29.05 percent increase over the first half of 2010. Imports from Thailand to the U.S. reached \$12.2 billion, 17 percent increase over the same period last year.

Thai OCA Minister Kessiri said that results show "robust growth" in Thai-U.S. trade in the first six months of this year. "We are encouraged by the increase in both goods exported by the U.S. to Thailand, and imports to the

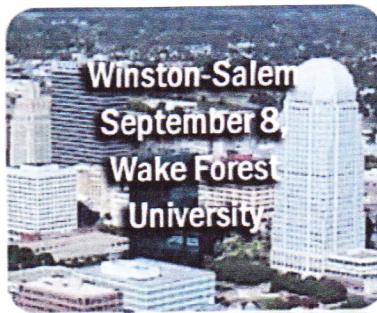
U.S. from our country," she said.

For more Thai-U.S. trade statistics, please visit: http://oca.thaiembdc.org/webpages/trade_data/tradedata2011.html

HSDICES/REGISTRATION
2011 DEC - 2 PM 3:42

North Carolina, Texas, California Thai OCA Trade Events Highlight 'Thailand, Your Gateway to ASEAN Markets'

WASHINGTON, DC (Aug. 23, 2011) - Three major trade conferences organized by the Thai Embassy Office of Commercial Affairs (OCA) in Houston, Tex., San Diego, Calif., and Winston-Salem, N.C., this month and next are bringing together American business executives interested in expanding trade and investment with Thailand.



A luncheon briefing for members of the Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce was attended by 40 business leaders on August 11 with presentations by chamber officials, City of Houston, and a Thai delegation that included Ms. Jittima Srithapron, OCA Counselor; Mrs. Chantira J. Vivatrat, Director, Thai Trade Center, Los Angeles; and Ms. Peggy Peterka, Marketing Manager, Tourism Authority of Thailand, Los Angeles.



A similar program will be held in San Diego August 31st from 3:30 to 6 pm at the World Trade Center, organizer of the event.

On September 8th, 50 business leaders from North Carolina are expected to attend the Thai trade and investment breakfast to be held on the campus of Wake Forest University. A reception for Thai students studying at North Carolina colleges and universities is planned that evening at the Kenan Institute at UNC Chapel Hill.

Continued >

Free registration for the remaining two events, can be made online at:

SAN DIEGO www.wtcsd.org/events/wtcsd-calendar.

WINSTON-SALEM information is available at

www.globalcommunicators.com/thainorthcarolinaevent and guests may register by email to EugeniaSosa@globalcommunicators.com

"In 2010, Thailand experienced a 30 percent increase in U.S. exports coming to our country," Mrs. Kessiri Siripakom, OCA Minister (Commercial), said. "We believe Thailand as an entry point for ASEAN countries presents exciting opportunities for expanding United States business in Southeast Asia, resulting in more jobs for Americans and a higher standard of living for our citizens."

Minister Kessiri said rising global demand for U.S. products, especially from Asian countries, is a bright spot in an otherwise sluggish U.S. economy and has been cited as the reason economic experts are predicting a business rebound in the second half of this year. The robust demand abroad for U.S.

exports offers a special opportunity for manufacturers in the South. U.S. exports accounted for a record 13.4 percent of GDP in the first quarter of 2011.

Total exports from the United States to Thailand in 2010 were \$8.9 billion, the minister said. "The potential for a number of U.S. business sectors is clear," she said. "We hope American businesses interested in tapping the ASEAN markets find these trade and investment gathering helpful in making decisions to increase trade and build long term business relationships in our country."



Thai FTAs around world described at Houston event.



Houston business executives talk after the program Aug. 11th.

ASEAN Members Move toward 'Single Window' for Regional Trade Processes with Cargo Agreement

At a meeting of 30 trade and customs officials from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) August 19th in Singapore, the focus was on streamlining specific import and export cargo clearance processes in preparation for implementation of the ASEAN Single Window (ASW).



ASEAN member states agreed to establish National Single Windows (NSWs) by 2012 and to connect them through a regional Single Window by 2015. The program is a cornerstone of establishing the ASEAN Economic Community. The action is part of a capacity building program sponsored by the U.S. government in partnership with ASEAN.

Through a NSW, traders electronically submit forms for export, import and transit procedures only once, which are then processed and cleared by multiple government agencies in a single integrated process. The ASW will provide a secure architecture that will allow NSWs to exchange cargo clearance data electronically.

Seven ASEAN countries will begin pilot tests in the next few months of a regional data exchange platform in anticipation of full implementation of the ASW.

(Based on media information provided by ASEAN.)

WSD/CEC/REGISTRATION
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2011 DEC -2 PM 3:42



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Thailand Flood Relief and Recovery Bulletin

Prepared by the Office of Commercial Affairs, Royal Thai Embassy, Washington, DC

No. 3 Tuesday, November 22, 2011

www.commercethaiusa.org

Toyota to Stay in Thailand, a 'Premier Manufacturer without Equal,' Despite Floods, Production to Resume

While Thailand's floods offer a golden opportunity for automakers to diversify their investment across the region - hunting down cheaper suppliers in nearby Vietnam or Indonesia - the kingpin of the Thai market, Toyota, has no plans to go anywhere.

"Toyota is so comfortable in Thailand, I don't see any major move away any time soon," said auto industry analyst Michael Dunne. "Thailand is a premier manufacturer without equal." Toyota has said it has scrambled to source parts from other manufacturers in the region and it plans to resume production by November 21. It plans to restore output further down the supply chain in North America - currently running at 10% lower than before the flooding - to normal levels in the coming week. Nevertheless, Thailand is too good a fit for Toyota for it to leave permanently. When the floodwaters recede the automaker has vowed to return.



Thai Tourism Authority says 97 Percent Of Tourist Sites Safe from Floods

In a statement issued this week by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), it was reported that some 40 of Thailand's 1,200 tourist attractions that appeal to international visitors, or around 3 per cent of Thailand's key tourist attractions, have been affected by the floods. The World Heritage Site in Ayutthaya, around 50 km north of Bangkok, is also dry now.

TAT said tourist attractions and destinations outside of Thailand's central provinces are experiencing normal conditions and continue welcoming visitors. This includes Pattaya, Phuket, Rayong and Chiang Mai. Almost all other tourist destinations in Thailand including Sukhothai, Chiang Rai, Surat Thani and Ko Samui, are also not affected by the flooding in the Central Region. Even in the Central Region, places such as Hua Hin and ChaAm are outside the area affected by the flood.



2011 DEC - 2 PH 3:12
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Quick Recovery in Tourism Expected

BANGKOK (Nov. 18, 2011, based on Reuters dispatches) - Thailand's worst floods in 50 years have hit tourism at the start of the high season, but the country has recovered quickly in the recent past from all sorts of scourges and some tour operators are hopeful a recovery might start next month. Tourism accounts for 6 percent of GDP and employs at least 15 percent of the workforce in Thailand, Southeast Asia's second-largest economy.

Thais Celebrate Loi Krathong Festival amid Floods

Every year when the moon is full and the rainy season draws to an end, Thailand's waterways fill with millions of floating lotus-shaped lanterns — a symbolic, centuries-old gesture once meant to placate the country's goddess of water. Today, many Thais still believe the candlelit boats launched during Loy Krathong can carry misfortune away with them, allowing past sins to be cleansed and life to begin anew.



[Continued >](#)

Suvnabhumi Airport Thai Gateway Fully Operating

Suvanabhumi Airport, the main gateway to Thailand for international flights, is not affected by the flood and all flights continue operating as per usual. The airport, which has considerable water management and flood prevention measures, serves over 800 flights per day. There were more than 958,000 international visitor arrivals at Suvanabhumi Airport during October 2011, an increase of 6.7 per cent over the previous year. Connecting flights from Suvanabhumi Airport to other airports to other destinations within Thailand are operating normally. During the first nine months of 2011, international tourist arrivals to Thailand reached 14.4 million. Over 1.3 million of these arrivals were from China, a 9.06 per cent increase over the same period last year. Some 42 per cent were repeat visitors and 43 per cent travelled in group tours.



ASD/CCS/TH
U.S. EMBASSY
BANGKOK

2011 DEC - 2 PM 3:43

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Thailand Flood Relief and Recovery Bulletin

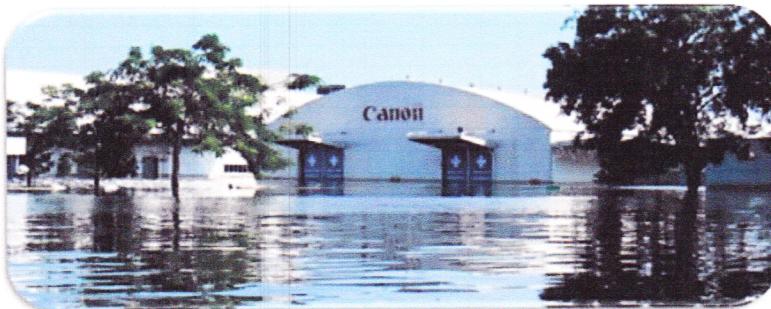
Prepared by the Office of Commercial Affairs, Royal Thai Embassy, Washington, DC

No. 2 Friday, November 4, 2011

www.commercethaiusa.org

2011 DEC-2 PH 3:41

Thai Government Expects Early Factory Reopenings in Flooded Business Parks



BANGKOK (Nov. 3, 2011, Bangkok Post) - All of the seven industrial estates ravaged by floods (in Thailand) are expected to resume operations early next year, an assistant to the industry minister said on Thursday.

Suparp Khleekachai said that at a meeting of officials and investors yesterday to explore ways of restoring the flood-hit industrial estates it was initially agreed that all of them would begin to pump water out of their flooded premises on Nov. 10.

After the water is drained it would take about one month for them to complete the clean-up work and another three to four months to repair damaged machinery. It was expected the factories in the seven industrial estates would gradually resume operations and production early next year, Mr. Suparp said.

Measures in Place to Support Rehabilitation of Damaged Factories

Mr. Suparp said the government had prepared measures to help both the operators of the industrial estates and the factories with rehabilitation. It would require a large sum of money. Measures would also be taken to prevent the industrial estates from flooding again in the long run. As much as 1.2 billion baht (US\$39 million) would be needed to build a flood prevention system at Rojana Industrial Park in Ayutthaya alone, he said.

Federation of Thai Industries President Payungsak Chartsuthipol said eight working committees had been set up to plan the restoration of industries damaged by floods. Seven of the committees were to work on the rehabilitation of the seven devastated industrial estates and the other to rehabilitate small and medium enterprises (SMEs) outside the estates.

He said the committees would coordinate with government and private agencies, including the local Provincial Electricity Authority, to help bring the industrial estates back into operation as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, a working committee for the restoration of the six flood-ravaged industrial estates in Ayutthaya province has agreed to begin draining water out of Saha Rattananakhon in one or two days.



Continued >

Thailand Government to Waive Tax On Some Flood Insurance Claims

BANGKOK (Nov. 1, 2011, Bloomberg) - Thailand's government will waive taxes on insurance claims for machinery damaged by flooding, Finance Minister Thirachai Phuwanatharanubala said. Existing tax rates will apply to insurance claims for loss of revenue related to the floods, he told reporters today in Bangkok.

Economic Impact of Flooding Assessed By Bank of Thailand, Inflation to be Short-Lived



BANGKOK (Nov. 3, 2011, Bangkok Post) - The Thai economy is expected to remain sluggish for a while due to the country's worst floods in half a century, according to the Bank of Thailand. BoT domestic economy department senior director Methee Supapong said Thursday there had been a decline in exports, industrial output, tourism and domestic consumption.

"Exports of electronic goods and hard disk drives have a tendency to decline because of the state of the global economy but the flooding will likely prolong the slump. The sector that will suffer more impact is tourism as traveling might not be easy, but there'll be some tourists coming to the country because foreign tourists understand the situation in Thailand," Mr. Methee said.

The central bank's study found business and consumer confidence had fallen below the 50-point level as sales orders had been down for some time because of the widespread flooding in the North, Northeast and the Central Plains.

However, the BoT expected the inflation caused by the severe flooding would be short-lived. Product prices would return to normal when the water recedes. It was unlikely to affect next year's inflation rate, he added.



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Thailand Flood Relief and Recovery Bulletin

Prepared by the Office of Commercial Affairs, Royal Thai Embassy, Washington, DC

NO. 1 Tuesday, November 1, 2011

www.thailembdc.org

Thai Prime Minister Says Worst may be Over, 'We will Recover Soon' from Devastating Flood in Thailand

BANGKOK (Oct. 31, 2011) - In the aftermath of a close call Sunday for Bangkok from the country's ravaging flood waters, Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra (below) declared that the worst appeared to be over and that "we will recover soon," the Wall Street Journal reported today. The major problem for Thailand continues to be the mass of water inundating the sweeping housing subdivisions and industrial parks just north of the capital that remains a threat to Bangkok as it pushes to the sea. Thailand's central bank is projecting economic growth to slump to 2.6 percent this year from its early forecast of more than 4 percent. The Thai government is gearing up for a massive cleanup and recovery operation in an effort to retain the confidence of foreign investors who have seen their supply chains crippled by the disaster. "The automobile and computer-component plants in the industrial zones north of Bangkok have been hit especially hard, with around a quarter of the world's production of hard-disk drives now shut down and auto makers such as Toyota Motor Corp. cutting back output at plants as far away as Canada and the U.S. because of a shortage of key parts," the Wall Street Journal reported.



2011 DEC - 2 PM 3:41
US/THAILAND

Thai Government Outlines Relief and Recovery Plan for Short-Term, Longer-Term Effects of Flood Damage



The OCA delegation had meetings BANGKOK (Oct. 28, 2011) - Thailand's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Commerce Mr. Kittiratt Na-Ranong (left) last week briefed diplomats and NGOs here on a comprehensive, proactive series of immediate and longer-term flood relief measures that included a five-point plan for tackling major economic impact from the flood. For a copy of the Relief and Recovery Plan, please visit www.commercethaiusa.org.

Main Economic Measures

The plan calls for immediate draining of water from factories and industrial parks and launching infrastructure restoration. It also includes complete inventory of damage to machinery and equipment for insurance compensation, expediting claims payments, and cooperation from banks in easing lending requirements.

Assistance will be provided in moving machinery, equipment and inventory to safe places. Visa procedures will be facilitated for foreign experts and mechanics, while identifying local experts from academia and the private sector for repair of machinery, equipment and infrastructure. Three additional import-export document processing centers will supplement current facilities.

Skill-development programs will help affected workers return to their jobs, meet the needs of employers, and provide training in new skills. Roads and infrastructure repairs to flooded streets will be expedited to restore commuter routes to work. Water from flooded areas will be drained within two months. A series of approaches to monitoring, rationing and regulating prices of goods and services will be put in place.

Continued >

US 'has Confidence' in Thailand



BANGKOK (Oct. 31, 2011, Bangkok Post) - Despite the huge task ahead after the flood recedes, Thailand has the capacity to bounce back, US Ambassador to Thailand Kristie Kenny said Monday afternoon. Mrs. Kenny was commenting after delivering the fourth batch of U.S. supplies to the Thai Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation. The U.S. disaster assessment team has worked with the Thai military, government agencies, and international organizations to ensure the appropriate distribution of flood relief, said Mrs. Kenny. The US had provided items that would not be duplicated by other donors. "Our aid is so far worth 33 million baht (\$1.1 million) and we are looking beyond the relief stage to rehabilitation in areas such as health care and education. American business is also keen to help with Thai economic recovery," she said.

Auto-Rickshaw Racers Bypass Bangkok, Finish Line Moved To Southern Thai Beach Resort



(Oct. 28, 2011, Southeast Asia Real Time) - The thrill-seekers now traversing Southeast Asia in auto-rickshaws are willing to face bone-rattling roads, nasty insects and punishing tropical heat. But they aren't willing to brave Thai floods. Organizers of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations rickshaw run ... designed to help promote the common links between ASEAN countries and raise money for charity, have decided to move the finish line from Bangkok...to the southern Thai beach resort of Krabi. More than 20 teams remain in the race, which was put together by Asian nations and UK-based company The Adventurists. It's designed to be as challenging as possible. No specific route was crafted for the trip, and the rickshaws are traveling without back-up. "The flooding is not as widespread as the media coverage may indicate. It has mainly affected some of the provinces in the Central Region," said a statement by Governor Suraphon Svetasreni of the Tourism Authority of Thailand on October 16.

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2011 DEC -2 PM 3:43
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